

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 VO-03 SCA-01 NSC-10 NSCE-00 SS-20

SAM-01 RSC-01 DRC-01 /055 W

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P 220420Z FEB 74

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1404

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 PEKING 0303

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS PFOR CH

SUBJ: CHINESE COMPLAINT RE VISA FORM LETTER

SUMMARY: DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR DEPARTMENT, TIEN PING CALLED IN DC-HOLDRIDGE FEBRUARY 21 TO PROTEST LANGUAGE IN FORM LETTER WHICH USLO HAD REQUESTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRINTING HOUSE TO PRINT IN CHINESE FOR REPLY TO INQUIRIES FROM WITHIN CHINA ABOUT US VISAS. END SUMMARY.

1. ON FEBRUARY 20, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR DEPARTMENT, TIEN PING, REQUESTED DEPUTY CHIEF HOLDRIDGE TO CALL ON HIM FEBRUARY 21. AT THE MEETING T'IEN P'ING DISPENSED WITH PRELIMINARY CONVERSATION AND BEGAN READING IN CHINESE FROM A STATEMENT WHICH HE READ IN ITS ENTIRETY BEFORE AN INTERPRETER READ ENGLISH TRANSLATION.

2. STATEMENT SAID THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRINTING HOUSE IN PEKING HAD REPORTED THAT IT HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY USLO TO PRINT A GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET FOR VISA APPLICANTS. THE STATEMENT CONTAINED "GRAVE INSULTS TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA" AND WAS "PREPOSTEROUS DOCUMENT."

3. THE STATEMENT CONTINUED THAT THE PRC DEEMED IT NECESSARY TO INFORM THE US SIDE THAT IT WAS IMPERMISSIBLE TO PRINT AND DISTRIBUTE THE INFORMATION SHEET.

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4. THE STATEMENT NOTED THAT THE PRCLO CHIEF HUANG CHEN,

HUANG HUA AND OTHERS WERE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

5. TIEN P'ING CONCLUDED BY QUESTIONING USLO'S INTENTIONS WITH REGARD TO CHINESE/AMERICAN RELATIONS AND EXPRESSED REGRET OVER THE MATTER.

6. HOLDRIDGE REPLIED THAT HE WAS PERSONALLY UNACQUAINTED WITH THE DOCUMENT AND WOULD INVESTIGATE. HE SAID THERE WAS NO INTENTION ON THE PART OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT TO DAMAGE RELATIONS WITH THE PRC WHICH WERE VALUED HIGHLY. HOLDRIDGE SAID HE WOULD REPORT THE MATTER IMMEDIATELY TO THE DEPARTMENT. TIEN P'ING OBSERVED HERE THAT "IT IS NECESSARY TO DO SO."

7. TIEN P'ING THEN SPOKE EXTEMPORANEOUSLY, SAYING THAT WHETHER USLO OR THE DEPARTMENT WAS INVOLVED WAS AN INTERNAL MATTER WHICH DID NOT CONCERN HIM. HE NOTED THAT THE DOCUMENT HAD BEEN HANDED TO THE PRINTING HOUSE BY USLO AND THE "INSULT TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY" HAD AROUSED INDIGNATION AMONG THE WORKERS AND THEY HAD REFUSED TO PRINT IT. HE REPEATED THAT IT WAS IMPERMISSIBLE TO PRINT AND DISTRIBUTE SUCH A DOCUMENT AND REQUESTED THAT USLO PICK UP THE DOCUMENT FROM THE PRINTING HOUSE.

8. HOLDRIDGE REPEATED HIS EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET, SAYING THIS WAS NOT A DELIBERATE MATTER AND NOTING THAT ACTIONS WITHIN USLO WHICH APPEAR ROUTINE TO THE ORIGINATOR OFTEN DO NOT REACH THE POLICY LEVEL OF THE OFFICE. HE ADDED THE US FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE PRC IS UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THIS HAD BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT SINCE THE BEGINNING OF OUR IMPROVED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRC. HE CONCLUDED SAYING THAT THE MATTER OF THE LETTER WOULD BE RECTIFIED. TIEN P'ING SAID HE WOULD INFORM HIS SUPERIORS OF THIS, AND ALSO CONVEY HOLDRIDGE'S EXPRESSIONS OF REGRET.

9. BACKGROUND: THE STATEMENTS FOUND OFFENSIVE WERE IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF THE DEPARTMENT'S STANDARD VISA FORM LETTER DSL 859 WHICH LISTS CERTAIN CLASSES OF PERSONS INELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE VISAS WITHOUT A WAIVER. (CRUX OF THE PROBLEM
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SEEMS TO BE THAT CHINESE FOUND IT OFFENSIVE THAT PERSONS WHO ARE MEMBERS OF COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS WERE LUMPED IN THE SAME SENTENCE WITH CRIMINALS AND THOSE HAVING CONTAGIOUS DISEASES.)

10. SINCE USLO HAS BEEN RECEIVING A NUMBER OF LETTERS IN CHINESE REQUESTING INFORMATION ON VISA APPLICATIONS, THE CONSULAR OFFICER SOME THREE WEEKS AGO ASKED OUR

JUNIOR INTERPRETER TO TRANSLATE DLS 859. THE INTERPRETATION WAS REVIEWED BY OUR SENIOR INTERPRETER WHO CONSIDERED THE TRANSLATION UNSATISFACTORY, AND SENT IT TO THE TRANSLATION UNIT OF THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICES BUREAU FOR REVIEW AND CORRECTIONS. (DSB MAINTAINS A TRANSLATION UNIT WHICH PROVIDES RAPID SERVICE FOR ALL MISSIONS WHO WISH TO HAVE TRANSLATIONS OF EDITORIALS, PAMPHLETS, BOOKS, ETC.)

11. SOME MODIFICATIONS OF DSL 859 HAD BEEN MADE BY THE CONSULAR OFFICER TO REFLECT THE STATUS OF THE LIAISON OFFICE, BUT HE DID NOT FORESEE THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE STANDARD LANGUAGE IN QUESTION WOULD RAISE. IN FACT THE DSB DID NOT NOR DID OUR INTERPRETER QUESTION THE LANGUAGE ALTHOUGH OUR INTERPRETERS HAVE SOMETIMES EITHER REFUSED TO MAKE TRANSLATIONS OF MATERIAL WHICH THEY CONSIDER INAPPROPRIATE, E.G. THE ANTI-MAOIST SLOGANS WHICH ARE OCCASIONALLY STAMPED ON INCOMING INTERNATIONAL MAIL, OR IN OTHER CASES HAVE NOT HESITATED TO SUGGEST MORE FELICITOUS LANGUAGE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PEKING 0303

12. WHEN THE FORM LETTER TRANSLATION WAS RETURNED BY THE DSB, OUR LOCAL STAFF APPROXIMATELY TEN DAYS AGO SENT IT WITH THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ORIGINAL DIRECTLY TO THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE PRINTING HOUSE.

13. LETTER HAS BEEN RETRIEVED FROM THE PRINTING HOUSE.

14. CONTEMPLATED USLO ACTION: ON MONDAY UNLESS

INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE WE PLAN TO REITERATE VIA NOTE TO MFA CONSULAR DEPARTMENT REGRET EXPRESSED BY HOLDRIDGE FOR INADVERTENT OFFENSE, STATING THAT IN VIEW OF BACKGROUND OF MATTER IT IS EVIDENT LETTER NOT INTENDED TO HAVE ANY POLICY IMPLICATION WITH RESPECT TO COURSE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND THAT USG AND ENTIRE STAFF USLO HAVE NO INTENTION OTHER THAN TO WORK TOWARD THE GOAL OF NORMALIZATION OF OUR RELATIONS IN SPIRIT OF SHANGHAI AND PEKING COMMUNIQUES.

15. FORM LETTER IS STILL NEEDED. AFTER FEW DAYS WE WOULD EXPECT TO SEND TO PRINTER "SANITIZED" LETTER, WITH INTENT TO EXPLAIN CERTAIN ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AD HOC TO APPLICANTS AS NECESSARY.

16. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE MATTER WAS PRESENTED TO HOLDRIDGE BY CONSULAR DEPARTMENT, WE BELIEVE CHINESE DISPLEASURE IS ON A PAR WITH OUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH NORTH AMERICAN DEPARTMENT WHICH USUALLY CALLS IN RANKING DEPUTY WHENEVER UNPLEASANT PROBLEMS ARE TO BE DISCUSSED.

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17. WHILE WE HAVE NO TANGIBLE INDICATION THAT STRONG CHINESE REACTION WAS CAUSED BY FACTORS OTHER THAN FORM LETTER ITSELF, PRESENT CLIMATE IN CHINA WITH THE ANTI-FOREIGN OVERTONES OF THE ANTI-LIN/CONFUCIUS CAMPAIGN MAY HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY HEIGHTENED CHINESE REACTION. WORKERS AT PRINTING HOUSE MAY WELL HAVE SEIZED ON LETTER AS WELCOME MEANS OF PROVING TO THE AUTHORITIES THEIR VIGILANCE DURING PRESENT CAMPAIGN. MFA AUTHORITIES IN TURN APPEAR TO HAVE USED INCIDENT TO PROBE (PARAGRAPH 5 ABOVE) WHETHER OUR POLICY LINES ARE FIRM. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT OUR HAVING APPOINTED A DISTINGUISHED NEW AMBASSADOR TO TAIPEI MAY HAVE PLAYED A PART IN PROMPTING SUCH A PROBE.

18. RECOMMENDATION TO DEPARTMENT: IF PRC NOW BELIEVES, OR BECOMES AWARE, THAT DSL-859 IS PASSED OUT GLOBALLY, IT MAY WELL LODGE STRONG COMPLAINT AT USG INSTEAD OF USLO LEVEL. IN VIEW OF OUR SERIOUS ATTEMPTS AT DETENTE WITH BOTH MAJOR COMMUNIST POWERS, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER REPHRASING, WITHIN PRESENT LAWS, "ELIGIBILITY" PARAGRAPH OF FORM LETTER. AS MINIMUM, PERHAPS REFERENCE TO MEMBERSHIP IN COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS (READ BY PRC AUTHORITIES AS "PARTY" TO WHICH THEY ARE DEDICATED) NEED NOT BE JUXTAPOSED TO MIXED BAG OF UNDESIRABLES OF OTHER ILKS.

19. HOPEFULLY LOCAL INCIDENT WILL NOW DIE, THOUGH IT

MAY NOT IN PRESENT CLIMATE. IF CHINESE RAISE IN
WASHINGTON, DEPARTMENT HAS BACKGROUND.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS, VISAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PEKING00303
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740215/aaaaaofb.tel
Line Count: 226
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
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Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUL 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <21 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

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Review Release Event: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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Status: NATIVE
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To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005